

553 it refers to a family event, such as Gambo, "the person who was born after twins." Names, then, reflect many of the social relationships and social circumstances of the individual being named and his relationship to those around him. However, the main point of the naming ceremony is quite clear. As one Kanuri put it,

We celebrate the naming because the child and the family are fortunate; the infant has escaped death and entered successfully into life; it is therefore a joyful occasion.

Infancy

858 For the first eighteen months of his life a child is referred to exclusively as *tiful* or new-born infant without anyone referring to its age. The period marks the beginning of the infant's membership in society and its most obvious sign is breast-feeding. Perhaps the best single word to describe the infant period is that of "introduction," for during these first few months the baby is introduced to the family, to friends of the family, the neighborhood, the ward, indeed to the community as a whole.

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[825] Any jealousy or antagonism felt towards the new baby by its older brothers and sisters is recognized as such and dealt with firmly but gently. Even cats are supposed to be jealous of new babies and are prevented by adults from coming near them. Very often an older brother or sister is sent away from the house to a nearby compound during the period of the birth, especially if there is a grandparent living close by. On the day of the naming ceremony all the older children in the family up to the age of ten receive little gifts in honor of the occasion. At one ceremony we saw a little boy of two and a half being brought back from the grandparent's house where he had been living for about a week. He was brought to the new infant and told, "This is our new baby. Be kind to him and look after him." All the children of the household were given little gifts that same day and told the same thing. After the ceremony was over many of the women in the compound devoted some time to playing with the children and showing them affection. Everyone pointed out repeatedly what a fine thing it was for the children to have a new brother in the family. If during the next few weeks the older children should show any signs of hostility they are sent away again to another compound for periods up to a month or two. At this new compound they are told again and again about the necessity of showing affection and being responsible for younger brothers and sisters. In other words, "sibling rivalry" is understood, anticipated, and dealt with in a way that reduces tensions and calmly recognizes the normality of an older child's jealousy when all attention turns to a new baby in the family.

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863 The new infant spends most of its first eighteen months with its mother. However, short sorties with older sisters occur now and then. On the other hand, the father has very little to do with the child at this stage, although he often comes by to see it. The baby soon learns to sit quietly while it is swaddled in a straddling-sitting position on its mother's back. Toilet training at this stage is minimal. The mother, rather than the child, tries to learn when the child is likely to urinate. At first the child is merely wiped clean by the mother, but as soon as it can sit up, it is placed astride her ankles with its back resting on her upturned feet. A little hole is

dug in the sandy soil between the ankles and the infant then has a simple and comforting toilet ready made for it by the mother. Afterwards its loins are washed and the hole covered up with sand. During the entire infant stage breast-feeding is carried on easily and simply upon demand by the infant for the breast. Indeed the breast is generally used as a pacifier. 863
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A typical scene in a mother's hut illustrates the way in which the introduction of a new baby to society is carried out. The mother and her friends sit around chatting and they pass the baby around, dandling it in turn, although the baby remains with the mother for a large part of the time. A very common topic of conversation at such times is, quite unsurprisingly, the new baby. But unlike a similar group of American ladies most of the talk is *to* and not *about* the baby. The mother and many of those present tell the 'uncomprehending' infant in sing-song voices about its kindred, "So-and-so is your father, so-and-so is your brother, so-and-so is your sister," and so on through a vast complex of kinship links on both the mother's and the father's side of the family. The infant is also told in the same way about its neighborhood, its section of the town, or its village, its political leaders, and so on. "So-and-so is your village head, so-and-so is your district head, and this is your tribe and this is your emirate, and this is your *Sbebu*, and so-and-so is your Waziri." The family occupation is also mentioned and how soon the infant is going to help in such-and-such activities around the compound and grow up into successful adulthood within the framework of all the associations and expectations that are referred to constantly. 867
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Why tell a baby about its social connections, occupational expectations, political affiliations, and so on? Certainly later on, when it can understand a little more of the language, such talk is a means of initiating it into the social groupings of the society. However at this stage another function is performed. The child is a new member of the society, and it is being introduced into and given a recognizable place in its social setting. The new member means new relationships. So-and-so who did not have a younger brother's son, now has one; someone else now has a new cousin and perhaps a future spouse; or someone else now has a sister's son or an additional one. The coming of the *tiful* or infant creates changes because a new member has been added and in introducing it to society people are asked to shift their understanding of the organizations which now must include this new member. By constantly referring to these new relationships during the infant's first few months people close to the family affirm to themselves and finally to others the fact that many relationships are different now that the new baby has arrived safely. 867
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As far as training goes, the *tiful* is too young to be very harshly dealt with or to be told not to do this or that. Its primary task is to survive and grow into a useful, law-abiding, member of its community. 861
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Childhood

Infancy ends as weaning begins, about the end of the eighteenth month although a good deal of variation exists in actual practice so that many are weaned earlier. In general weaning is carried out with a matter-of-fact attitude as if to say, 862
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858 on the day of the naming ceremony. This is believed to apply only
867 to young children under the age of five or six; older ones are sufficiently socialized so that rivalry presents no overt problem. At one naming ceremony a small girl of two and a half was observed being brought back from her namesake grandparent's compound where she had been living for the last week. She was admonished upon presentation to the new infant, "This is your new baby — be gentle with him and look after him." Both the little girl and her full brother aged nine or ten had been given small gifts that day, she, two little glass bangles, and he, a new shirt. Later, after the naming ceremony was over, many of the women in the compound devoted some time to playing with and showing affection to the two elder siblings and pointing out to them what a fine thing it was that they had a new little brother.

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The new infant spends most of the nursing period with its mother although short sorties with elder female siblings occur now and then. The father although he sees the child often interacts very little with it. The infant learns very soon to sit quietly on the back of its mother while it is swaddled comfortably to be carried about. Toilet practices are simple at this time. At first the child is merely wiped clean by the mother. However, as soon as it can sit up, it is placed facing the mother, astride her ankles and with its back resting on her upturned feet. A little hole is dug in the sandy soil between the ankles and the child has a simple and comforting toilet ready-made for it by the mother. When the baby is finished, the mother washes its genital regions and/or anus with her left hand and covers up the hole. Babies wear only a small

- 254 shirt, and nothing below the waist, except when they are swaddled to the mother's back. When the baby defecates or urinates indoors, as is often the case, it is cleaned up with no great show of alarm, 253 until the end of the first eighteen months. Breast feeding occurs on demand, and is used as a pacifier.

Childhood

862 [258] 114 With the onset of childhood, which is formalized at eighteen months by weaning, the overt pressures of socialization begin for the young child. No systematic data were gathered on the effects of this formal change-over from breast-feeding. Everyone knew of a wide range of variation in reaction on the part of the infants; some babies wean easily, others require much more training. In the latter case, the more stringent techniques are utilized, but still with a matter of fact, unperturbed attitude towards the inevitability of the weaning procedure.

In most cases the child has a female grandparent either in the compound or nearby. If not, then a senior woman of the compound or of the family helps with the weaning by offering her dry breast as a pacifier. The mother spreads the process over several months by constantly attempting to replace the breast with a cup. When the child runs to its mother desirous of the breast, the parent refers to it negatively, as dirt, or even excrement. With difficult cases bitter tasting grounds of brown leaves are put on the breasts to discourage continued efforts by the child to obtain the mother's milk.

597 It is just after weaning that most Kanuri adoptions take place. A very rough estimate of adoptions, taken from genealogical data, would put the figure at somewhere between 35-45% for the present